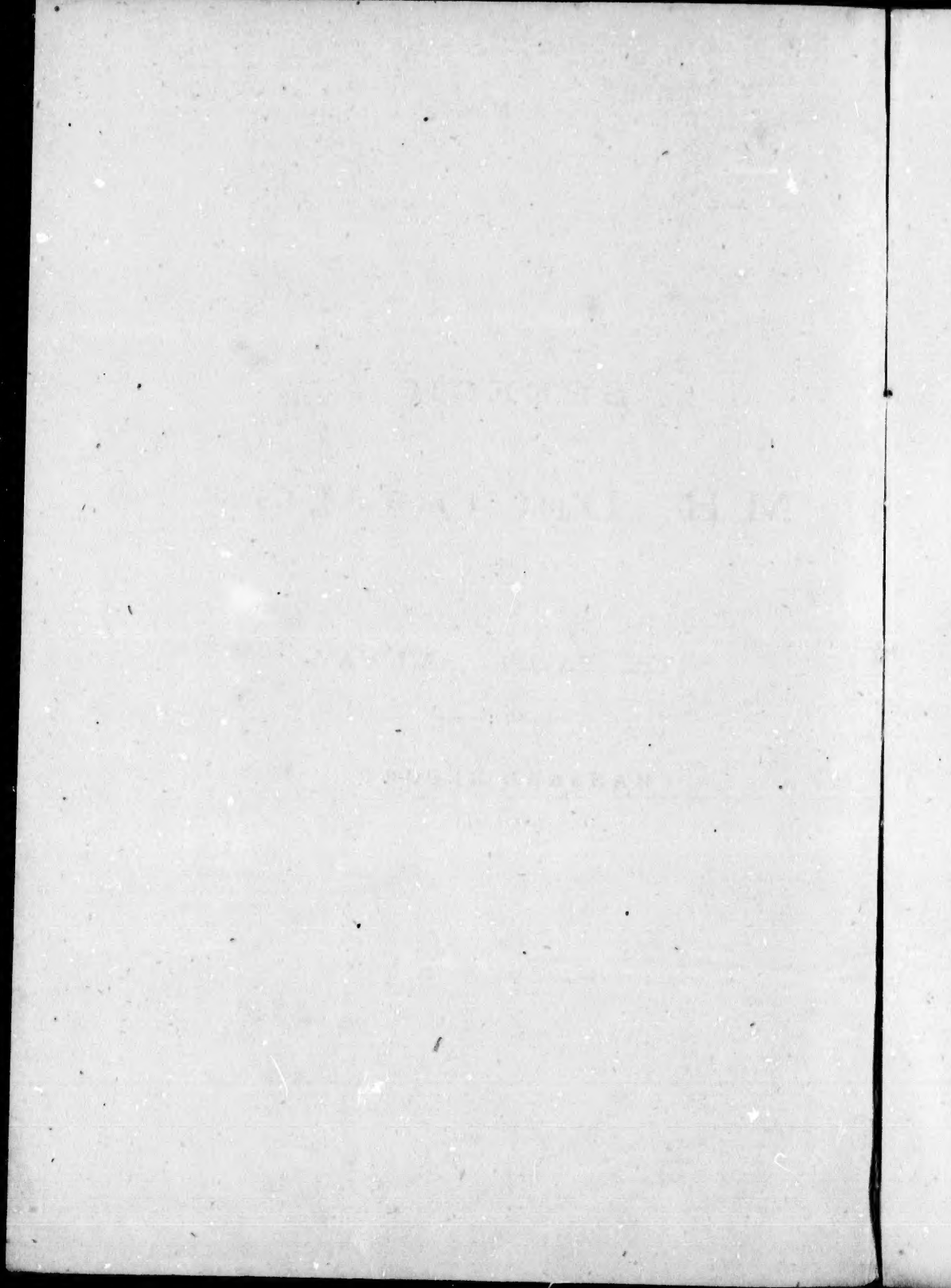

SPEECH
OF
MR. DECOSMOS

ON
SELECTING THE BEST HARBOR IN BRITISH COLUMBIA FOR A TERMINUS OF
THE PACIFIC RAILWAY.

—:O:—
HANSARD REPORT

(Corrected.)



HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 28th Feb., 1878.

BEST TERMINUS FOR THE PACIFIC RAILWAY.

MOTION FOR RETURN.

MR. DECOSMOS moved for a return containing a complete copy of every special and general report of the Chief Engineer and Acting Chief Engineer of the Canadian Pacific Railway in possession of the Government, respecting the cost of constructing the line of the Canada Pacific Railway, (including the bridges) between the head of Bute Inlet and some place or port in Vancouver Island. He said the question that he proposed to raise was of more immediate importance than that of the hon. the member for Vancouver (Mr. Bunster) in favour of biennial Parliaments. He would state that the members on the floor of this House, the hon. the Minister of Public Works, the press, and the people generally, had been under an impression that, if the railway passed from Fort George to Bute Inlet, and thence to a first-class port on Vancouver Island, it would be necessary to expend a vast sum of money in constructing the latter section. Now, he was persuaded, from reading the report of Mr. Fleming, issued during the past year, that he had never recommended that the railway should be constructed from the head of Bute Inlet to Vancouver Island at present; that there was nothing at all in the report to indicate that the railway should now be constructed on the mainland beyond Waddington Harbour; but, that thence, a ferry should be used to reach Vancouver Island until such time as the Dominion could afford to complete this section of the railway; and that thus a vast sum of money, which was said to be enormous—twenty millions of dollars—need not be expended at all. It was to get the report in favour of Waddington Harbour being made a temporary terminus, if there were such a report, before the House, that this motion was made, in order that they might at once have the evidence that the railway need not be located on a line objectionable and injurious alike to the Dominion and to the Province of British Columbia. In saying this he begged to draw the attention of the House to a matter of very

great importance in connection with selecting a port as the western terminus of this railway. He had before taken occasion to intimate to this House that there were only three ports south of British Columbia, in the territory of the United States, where a trans-continental terminus on the Pacific could be established. The first was San Diego, near the 32nd parallel, on the Mexican border, towards which the Texas Pacific Railway was now in progress. The next place where a railway terminated was San Francisco Bay. From that bay northerly, no other point could be made the terminus of a trans-continental railway, except Puget Sound, opposite Victoria. Now, they would discover from this fact that, if the Canadian Pacific Railway were to become a competing line with American lines, the greatest care should be used in locating the route of the railway, and more especially the port on the Pacific where it should terminate. He doubted whether those who gave their attention to public statistics or the commercial interests of the Dominion in this House, had ever turned their attention to the position of San Francisco, which, to-day, was one of the greatest commercial cities in the world. We had to look at the present position of San Francisco in order to form a correct judgment as to where the terminus of our Pacific Railway should be located. In order to give the House some idea of the business done by San Francisco, and the importance of that city, he would read some of its statistics for 1877, and would compare these statistics with those of the whole Dominion of Canada for 1877, now before the House. In the first place, he would take the imports. The imports of Canada amounted to \$99,327,962, the imports of the port of San Francisco, not including treasure, were \$75,713,287. That new country, scarcely thirty years old, had imported nearly as much merchandise as the whole of the Dominion of Canada. The exports of Canada were \$75,875,393, while the exports of San Francisco, excluding treasure, were \$61,911,237. The aggregate foreign trade of the port of San Francisco for last year was \$137,624,509, within \$40,000,000 of the aggregate

gate foreign trade of the whole of this Dominion. In drawing attention to this fact, he again drew attention to the importance of selecting a port in the Pacific Ocean where we could successfully compete with the ports of the States in a trans-continental and trans-Pacific business. The total Customs revenue of this Dominion from all ports was \$12,000,000 and over; the total Federal revenue received from the port of San Francisco alone was \$8,803,034. If they took the port of Montreal, our largest commercial city, they found the total Customs collected there last year amounted to \$3,878,507, while the port of San Francisco, in Customs alone, paid to the Federal treasury \$6,692,432. As our object in taking this railway to the Pacific was not merely to open up the intervening country to settlement, but to engage in the commerce of the Pacific, he would show what proportion of the commerce of San Francisco went to other countries than the States and territories of the United States. There was merchandise, exclusive of treasure, to the amount of \$44,351,425, sent from that port by sea to Europe and foreign countries on the shores of the Pacific Ocean; \$2,499,312 to New York by Panama; \$2,561,500 to New York by clipper; and \$12,000,000 sent east by rail. The foreign imports of San Francisco amounted to \$34,012,496; the domestic imports—by Panama \$3,700,788; by rail \$18,000,000, and by clippers \$20,000,000. One half of the imports came from the United States, and the other half from foreign countries round the shores of the Pacific Ocean and elsewhere. Another fact, showing the great country we had to contend with in building a terminus on the shores of the Pacific, was that the estimated value of the productions of California, of all kinds, in 1877, was \$144,650,000. The treasure exports in that year were \$57,688,783, the treasure imports \$6,242,855 and the total coinage of silver and gold at the San Francisco mint, and the largest coinage ever made at one mint in one year by any nation of the world was \$49,772,000. With regard to the shipping—and if anything would show and prove conclusively to this House

and to this Ministry the necessity of selecting the most capacious and accessible port on the Pacific as our western terminus, it was the statistics of the arrival of vessels alone at San Francisco:—the arrivals of American vessels from domestic ports last year numbered 3,482, with an aggregate tonnage of 1,099,205 tons; American vessels that came from foreign ports 274, an aggregate of 348,234 tons; foreign vessels from foreign ports 246, with a total tonnage of 236,858 tons; American vessels coming in from fishing voyages 18, tonnage 4,501; American vessels from whaling voyages 16, tonnage 2,270; making the aggregate number of vessels 4,036, with a total tonnage of 1,631,068 tons. Now, if a young community like San Francisco, only 30 years old, had grown up to be such a giant in commerce as to employ 4,036 vessels with a tonnage of nearly two millions, to do her business, it could be easily seen by this House that we required a first-class port on the Pacific in order to do the business of this Dominion. But he would further claim the indulgence of the House in order to give some idea of the business done by railways which supplied the great port of San Francisco. The leading commercial newspaper of that city, in its admirable annual report of commerce and navigation for 1877, stated as follows:—

“Our railroad progress during 1874 was the most marked of any year since the completion of the trans-continental road. During it, several narrow-gauge roads have been projected and built, while the Southern Pacific has been completed over hundreds of miles of territory and finished as far as Fort Yuma in Arizona, to which point trains with goods and passengers are now constantly running. The heavy imports of steel rails, noted in another column, shows the vigour with which the work has been pushed. No long time will have elapsed before the Iron Horse has reached the Rio Grande on the borders of Texas. Then an immense tract of country, abounding in minerals and with large quantities of fertile lands, will be open to settlement, while the trade of San Francisco will extend to New Mexico, Colorado, and even Western Texas. The following extract from the report of the Railroad Companies gives more important points with regard to the railroad system of the State:

	Broad Gauge	Narrow Gauge
Length in Miles....	2,419½	195
Cost of Construction and equipments..	\$239,400,000	\$5,745,000
Average cost per mile	98,000	29,400
Expense since opening.....	103,090,000	1,151,000
Earnings since opening.....	128,671,000	1,019,000
Net earnings since opening.....	25,581,000	
Net loss since opening.....		132,000
Net earnings Central Pacific	26,192,000	
Net loss other broad gauge roads.....	610,000	
Earnings, year ending, June 30, 1877	24,343,000	647,000
Expenses year ending June 30, 1877.	20,008,000	731,000
Net earnings, year ending June 30, 1877	4,325,000	
Net loss year ending June 30, 1877.....		83,000
Cost of construction, year ending June 30, 1877.....	24,422,000	1,497,000
Miles constructed, year ending June 30, 1877.....	463	60

"Of the length of miles above given, 598½ belong to the Central Pacific in Nevada and Utah, leaving 2,016½ as the total length of broad and narrow gauge roads in California, on the 30th June last.

"The number of passengers carried last year was 7,242,118; the average distance travelled by each, 30 miles; the average charge for each passenger 3½ cents; the number of tons of freight carried, 2,032,353.

"The total length of railroad on the coast is as follows:

	Miles.
California	2,500
Nevada.....	617
Utah	450
Oregon	248
Wyoming	200
Washington	135
Total	4,150

Of this, 3,278 miles belong to the Central Pacific.

"The following is an official report of the earnings of the Central Pacific Railroad Company.

	November.	Since January 1st.
1877	\$1,597,000	
1878	1,675,532	\$15,392,107
1879	1,513,835	16,799,794
		15,696,854"

There were a few more points in connection with the wealth of San Fran-

cisco. The gold, silver and lead crop west of the Rocky Mountains, for last year, amounted to \$75,919,013; total exports of flour to China, Japan, New Zealand, England, and countries in and around Pacific Ocean, 435,000 barrels, value \$2,567,495. Total wheat exported, 127 vessels carrying 4,929,690 centals, valued at \$11,017,353; total wool clip 60,612,000 lbs; wool exported 52,584,902 lbs.; total goods manufactured in the State, estimated value \$50,000,000. The population of San Francisco was 300,000, it having increased since 1870 from 150,000. This was an increase at the rate of 100 per cent. during the seven years, and should she continue to increase her population in the same ratio she would have in 1891 at least one million people. Her assessed property last year was \$300,000,000, but in reality it was worth about \$500,000,000. She had 188 steamers and steamships in the trade. China, Australia, Panama, and coast Now it was not generally known, at all events it had not been alluded to in connection with the Pacific railway, that California had but a small number of square miles of territory in comparison with British Columbia. The whole of the American States washed by the Pacific Ocean measured only 362,888 square miles; of that California had 188,982; Oregon 102,606, and Washington 71,300 square miles. He had occasion recently to get a fair approximate measurement of British Columbia, and found that she had 330,000 square miles of territory, thus giving to the two principal Pacific States, California and Oregon, with Washington Territory only 32,888 square miles more than they had in British Columbia. Behind the States mentioned, which formed the Pacific seaboard of the United States, they found Arizona, with 130,800 square miles; Nevada, 83,500; Utah, 109,600; and Idaho, probably 100,000 square miles; a total of 443,900. The total number of square miles of United States territory west of the 110th meridian was 812,788. It had been generally asserted that the Canada Pacific Railway was only to be built for the benefit of British Columbia, or, in other words, to carry out

"a mad or insane agreement that was made by the late Administration with British Columbia." It had always appeared to him, whilst occupying a seat on the floor of this House, that the true Great West of Canada was unknown apparently to Ministers of the Crown as well as to the members of Parliament and the country. That Great West must find its chief port in British Columbia. Let any one take up a map and look at the country between the head of Lake Superior, Fort William, and the west shore of Vancouver Island, and they would discover that all the country west of the 110th meridian must of necessity do its business at a port on the Pacific Ocean. If any one would take the trouble to examine the country from the 49th parallel, extending to the north of the 60th parallel, and from the eastern boundary of British Columbia to the 110th meridian, he would find a large tract of country that was capable of settlement, a country rich in minerals as well as pastoral and agricultural land. That tract of country measured 257,000 square miles, and, if added to the total area of British Columbia, would make a territory of 587,000 square miles that must do its trade from the Pacific Ocean. And if they followed down the 110th meridian until it intersected the international boundary and stretched away to Mexican territory, and took in all the States he had mentioned, they would find that it cut through a portion of Montana, leaving Idaho and Washington territory on the west, through the eastern line of Utah, and stretched down the eastern boundary of Arizona. They might, therefore, expect that our civilization and their civilization would be built up from that meridian westward. He would take another point. If they started at Fort Chippewyan, Lake Athabasca in 59° north, which was near the 110th meridian—if they measured the country east and west from these points, they would easily perceive how true it was that a port in British Columbia must do the trade of that great country. If they stretched a line from Fort Chippewyan to the head of Bute Inlet, by the Peace River Valley and Pine River Pass, following the Pacific Railway projected line 250 miles, from

Stewart River to the sea, they had a distance of 958 miles from where the 110th meridian intersects Lake Athabasca; and if they took another line, from Fort Chippewyan to Fort William, on Lake Superior, including the projected line from Battleford to Fort William (961 miles) they had 1,411 miles. Now, was it to be supposed that wheat would be carried from Port Chippewyan to Fort William on Lake Superior, 400 miles further than to Bute Inlet, to find water communication to the ocean, when it could be moved 1,000 miles by rail to a port in British Columbia, and save the cost of 400 miles of land transportation, besides lake and river transportation to Montreal? He need not adduce evidence to show the fertility and resources of the true Great West, further than to draw attention to a recent lecture by Mr. Macoun, botanist, who was sent out by this Government to explore that country. That gentleman said: "As to the capability of the country for producing grain, the barley and wheat raised at 59° north latitude took the bronze medal at the Centennial, and the size and quality of all vegetable products was astonishing; all the weeds which in Ontario are small and stunted, are there, in the North-West, in some cases as high as a man's head." This extract showed that the country north of the 60th parallel, the northern boundary of British Columbia, and 958 miles north-east of Bute Inlet, was a good country for growing all kinds of cereals. Before he sat down he might call the attention of the Minister of the Interior to a matter which he (Mr. DeCosmos) had before taken occasion to refer to in that gentleman's presence in private. He (Mr. DeCosmos) thought that the portion of this great country east of the Rocky Mountains, along the watershed of these mountains, along the eastern boundary of British Columbia and to the 110th parallel ought to be explored, and explored thoroughly, so that at the next meeting of Parliament they might determine what that country was worth for minerals and for pastoral and agricultural purposes. Having given the House the benefit of these facts, and shown hon. members

the necessity of some 300,000 square miles east of the boundary of British Columbia being supplied with some port on the Pacific coast within our own territory, he took it that this Government would make a very great mistake indeed if, for the paltry consideration of a few millions of dollars to-day, it should select the wrong route. If the route by Butte Inlet cost a few millions of dollars more than any other route, that would be a mere nothing in comparison with the advantage that we would derive as a commercial people from selecting the best sea-port which we possessed on that coast.

MR. MACKENZIE said he presumed that some mistake had been made in

the wording of the last line of the motion in which the word bridges was introduced.

MR. DE COSMOS said the motion was intended to include any estimate that had been made with respect to bridges as well as anything else, and the words "including bridges" ought to be in parenthesis.

MR. MACKENZIE said there was no objection at all to the motion. He was not aware of the existence of any report of this kind except a hurried report of Mr. Marcus Smith respecting bridges that was not already before the House; but, if there were any, they would of course be brought down.

Motion agreed to.